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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fiftieth session
Agenda item 11 (c)

FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION

COORDINATING ROLE OF THE CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS BODIES AND MACHINERY DEALING WITH THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Afghanistan*, Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Finland, Germany, Haiti*, Hungary, Ireland*, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Philippines*, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Switzerland* and Venezuela: draft resolution

Development of public information activities in the field of human rights, including the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights

The Commission on Human Rights,

Reaffirming that activities to improve public knowledge in the field of human rights are essential to the fulfilment of the purposes of the United Nations set out in Article 1, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and that carefully designed programmes of teaching, education and information are essential to the achievement of lasting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms,

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* In accordance with rule 69, para. 3, of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

Recalling previous General Assembly and its own resolutions on this subject,

Recognizing the catalytic effect of United Nations initiatives on national and regional public information activities in the field of human rights,

Acknowledging the valuable role that non-governmental organizations can play in this endeavour,

Believing that the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights is a valuable complement to the activities of the United Nations aimed at the further promotion and protection of human rights, and recalling the importance attached by the World Conference on Human Rights to strengthening the World Campaign,

Welcoming the appointment of the High Commissioner for Human Rights with the function, inter alia, of coordinating relevant United Nations education and public information programmes in the field of human rights, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on the development of public information activities in the field of human rights, including the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights (E/CN.4/1994/36);

2. Appreciates the measures taken by the Secretariat to ensure the further production and effective dissemination of human rights information materials in regional and local languages, in cooperation with regional, national and local organizations, as well as with Governments, in particular as a component of the technical assistance projects of the Centre for Human Rights, and encourages the Secretary-General to ensure the widest possible dissemination of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and of information on its follow-up activities;

3. Requests the Centre for Human Rights to finalize its comprehensive review of the programme of information and publications in the field of human rights, including the elaboration of a new information strategy as described in the report of the Secretary-General, and to make an assessment of the effectiveness of this programme, and encourages the Centre to continue its efforts towards streamlining and focusing its publications programme;

4. Encourages the Centre to continue the development of training courses and materials, including targeted training manuals for professional

audiences, as described in the report of the Secretary-General, welcomes the convening in 1993 of expert meetings for the purpose of elaborating training manuals, and encourages the continuation of this procedure;

5. Welcomes the publication of the Human Rights Bibliography (United Nations publication, Sales No. G.V.E.92.0.16) by the Centre for Human Rights and the United Nations Library and its availability in electronic format through the United Nations Bibliographic Information System, and encourages the Centre actively to explore further possibilities for the production of computer-accessible human rights information and human rights databases;

6. Urges the Secretary-General to utilize more fully and effectively United Nations information centres for the purpose of timely dissemination, within their designated areas of activity, of basic information and reference materials on human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the reports of States parties to treaty-monitoring bodies, and, to this end, to ensure that United Nations information centres are supplied with adequate quantities of those materials, both in the official languages of the United Nations and in the relevant national languages;

7. Requests the Department of Public Information to make full use of its available resources to produce audio-visual materials on human rights issues, as specifically requested in paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 45/99;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to take advantage as much as possible of the collaboration of non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the World Public Information Campaign, including in the dissemination of human rights materials;

9. Encourages all Member States to make special efforts to provide, facilitate and promote publicity for the activities of the United Nations in the field of human rights, to accord priority to the dissemination in their respective national and local languages of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights and other international instruments and to provide information and education on the practical ways in which the rights and freedoms enjoyed under these instruments can be exercised;

10. Supports the recommendation of the World Conference on Human Rights that Member States develop specific programmes and strategies for ensuring the

widest human rights education and the dissemination of public information, taking particular account of the human rights needs of women, and encourages Member States, in drawing up national action plans for the promotion and protection of human rights, to include broad-based education and public information programmes on human rights;

11. Stresses that the Centre for Human Rights should have full responsibility for all United Nations publications in the field of human rights and, in this context, requests the Secretary-General to consider redeploying the financial and human resources within the Department of Public Information currently devoted to human rights activities to the Centre for Human Rights, as part of his efforts towards strengthening the Centre for Human Rights, to implement the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and to support the newly established office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights;

12. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission, at its fifty-first session, a report on public information activities, with special emphasis on the activities of the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights, including information on expenditures incurred in 1993 and those envisaged for future activities and other questions raised in the present resolution;

13. Decides to continue its consideration of the question at its fifty-first session under the agenda item "Further promotion and encouragement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the question of the programme and methods of work of the Commission".